

I am a musician, composer, singer, journalist and speaker who's been involved in both print and broadcast media in the UK and US since the mid 1960s.

Although I have not been signed with a record company and have not, as yet, recorded my own material, I have performed as a singer and musician for roughly forty years and have recorded as a session singer in the studio. I've worked in the UK, US and Canada and have composed a lot of instrumental pieces as well as having written several songs. Music is the centre of my life and, indeed, I have had a following as a performing artist.

I have lived and worked all over the US (although I'm from the UK) and I am currently in Nashville, Tennessee. I am utterly appalled at the horrible radio stations and programmes in this town and I rarely hear local artists featured on stations here and there is a severe lack of interest in local talent. To be honest, I've not bothered with radio here much at all, except in the low-powered Radio Free Nashville (at 100 watts). I have been featured on local radio as a guest who's been interviewed a few times (but not about music), and that's all. In Boston, Massachusetts, there are better radio stations and ones that feature local talent (WUMB being a good example and the former WJIB). I could and did contact them to encourage them to play certain local artists that we represented and artists that we knew -- with much better results than here in Nashville. I do NOT feel that any of the Nashville radio stations serve the local music community at all, except the new Radio Free Nashville; again, it's a very tiny station. For being 'Music City', I find Nashville radio to be pitiful!

In my opinion, the FCC has only responded to the marketing and demands of the huge corporate record companies and the like ... and NOT to the interest and needs of the local communities. I've only experienced the 'bottom line' being of any importance to the FCC and to broadcasting in this country in general. I've seen more and more individuals -- including myself -- turning completely AWAY from radio, because everything is so mass produced and of no lasting value, quality or talent and certainly having nothing to do with what is going on locally.

Should the FCC adopt a definition that measures „locally originated% or „locally produced% programming, or do either of these serve as an example of "local programming"? Yes, I think so -- at least for the most part. There's nothing wrong with featuring national material, but we need far more LOCAL content -- content that is specific to our local community and the abundance of talent that resides here. I don't hear them and don't even know who's 'in my back yard'. In fact, in general, artists in America have had to LEAVE America and go to the UK or the Netherlands, for example, to even generate any response or interest in their music. A good example of this is Paul Simon. He only 'made it' in the UK, then finally brought his talent back to the US and the rest is history. Should the FCC ensure that all programming decisions are made at the local station level? Yes!--at least a LOT more than is done now, because, as far as I can tell, the local community has got NO voice!

Local programming should not only consist of local news and public affairs, but local artists material -- both recorded and live performances. That's part of the great treasure of diverse culture and talent that's remained buried here that deserves to have a voice and be heard. If you don't hear the voice of the local community, then you've got nothing than a watered down 'walmart' in broadcasting ... where you've got a whole lot of nothing!

I want to hear the music of local artists and in all genres of music. I also want to hear what local individuals feel about certain issues within our community. Sure, cover a local sports event too, why not? And how about some poetry readings and other interesting material that's centred in the local community?

Should stations be evaluated on non-programming efforts such as „participation in local community activities or sponsoring fundraisers?% What about sponsoring charity events, like a walk for a local hospital? Yes, I think so, because, again, this is about LOCAL community involvement.

This is a really sore issue for me, so I'm going to decline comment herein. I will say that I do not believe, for one moment, that Payola has EVER been abolished! It's very much alive and well in this industry!!! :(

I am opposed to 'voice-tracking' in all ways, because it is misleading and deceptive and ... CHEAP! Whatever happened to basic honesty and integrity? I think that people need to be open and honest about their broadcasting procedures without question. I also agree with the statement that according to AFTRA, „when a media company uses voice-tracking as a strategy to eliminate live broadcasts and local employees altogether, the connection to the local community can be hurt.% People have spent too much time 'cutting corners' -- all for the sake of the almighty dollar and it WILL catch up with them in the end...

A limited amount of 'national playlists' is fine, because people do want to know what's going on nationally and even internationally ... BUT ... not at the expense of the LOCAL community and talent! There is virtually NO local representation on local radio and, again, it's utterly appalling! It's time that the big fat boys step aside and let radio be returned to and determined by the local community.

What do you think about LPFM stations?

Would you like to see more low power licenses available, especially in more populated areas?

Do you think LPFM stations could benefit the music community? If so, how? ABSOLUTELY!!! I'm very excited about Radio Free Nashville, for example, and it is my hope that this station will thrive and grow and that more and more of these stations will sprout up and serve communities -- both rural and more populated areas. They are serving the community that the BIG stations just aren't and, furthermore, they are NOT controlled by the 'fat boys' nor are there the biasis in the interest of BIG business.

As one who's been involved with media for most of my life, I'm truly excited at the thought that there could, indeed, be a change in favour of the local community ... at long last ... and that our voices can and will actually make a difference in the future of broadcasting. Thank you so kindly. :)